

Brendan M. Everett  
Anna E. Rutherford  
239 Cypress St.  
Newton, MA 02459

September 9, 2015

RE: Special Permit Application for 239 Cypress St.

Dear Newton Board of Aldermen,

Enclosed please find our special permit application for an addition to our home at 239 Cypress Street in Newton Center. We are writing to the Board to provide some background for our rationale for pursuing the addition as you consider our application.

We moved to Newton in June of 2008, and have embraced the community. Both of our children attend Bowen Elementary School, just down the street from our house. We are active in Newton Youth and Newton Girls Soccer, at the YMCA, and are members of the JCC. We both work in the Longwood Medical Area and chose to live in Newton because of its proximity to Boston, as well as its reputation for high quality schools and inclusive community. We would love to stay in Newton for the remainder of our working lives.

As you can see from the attached application, our house is a traditional center entrance colonial. It is a modest sized house, on a small lot. The floor plan is almost exactly the same as when the house was constructed in the 1930s. As such, the kitchen is quite small, and there is no space that is quite right for a family room or den. In addition, because of the design of the front door and hallway, this entrance does not allow us to easily don boots, hats, and coats before stepping outside. We hope to address all of these issues with the planned addition.

As you can see from the plans submitted with this letter, the total square footage that we hope to add to our house is 756 square feet. Approximately 264 square feet is actually in the basement, and counts towards our FAR because our house is built on a slope. In total, approximately 500 square feet of usable space would be added to our kitchen and to the bathroom on the third floor. Furthermore, our architect has included the third floor area as part of the FAR calculations. However, much of the third floor has low ceilings (<7 feet), which we believe should mitigate its consideration as part of the total FAR. Without the third floor square footage added to the calculation, the FAR is closer to 0.49.

We understand that the Aldermen have strong interest in maintaining an affordable housing market in Newton, a goal we wholeheartedly share. Indeed, when we were considering whether to proceed with a renovation, we tested the market for homes in Newton. We found that there were no houses in our price range that were able to match the important benefits of our current home. While looking at the housing market, we have noted a trend of knocking down older homes and building townhouses or similar structures. The market rate for the resulting townhouses is remarkable.

Thus, our decision to pursue this special permit application came after careful consideration and examination of what was available to us in the Newton housing market. We believe this modest renovation is a way for us to remain rooted in Newton, and to allow our children to continue to attend local Newton Schools. In short, we ask for your understanding and support. Included with this letter are letters of support from neighbors who abut our property. We hope you can take our concerns into account as you consider this application.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brendan M. Everett". The script is fluid and cursive.

Brendan M. Everett

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anna E. Rutherford". The script is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

Anna E. Rutherford